GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:311
ANSWERED ON:15.04.2002
WATER CRISIS
SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI;SUNDER LAL TIWARI

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to a news-item relating to the impending water crisis appearing in Rashtriya Sahara dated March 9, 2002;

(b) if so, whether any schemes have been formulated by the Government to overcome the water crisis; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the scheme is likely to be implemented ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENTREFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF STARRED QUESTION No.+311 TO BE ANSWERED IN THE LOK SABHA ON 15.04.2002 REGARDING WATER CRISIS.

Yes, Sir. As per the latest assessment made by Central Water Commission (CWC), the average annual water availability in the river-systems of the country is assessed at 1869 Billion Cubic Metre(BCM). As per thepopulation census of 2001 AD, the per capita water availability is 1820 cubic metre per year on a national level. However, due to the spatial variability of rain in the country and also because of variation in population density, per capita average annual availability of water in different basins presently varies from 16,990 cubic metre in Minor River Basins Draining into Bangladesh & Myanmar; 13,636 cubic metrein Brahmaputra−Barak basin to 298 cubic metre in Sabarmati basin. Further, the temporal variability in the rainfall also creates temporary scarcity of water in certain years.

In order to augment the availability of water for various uses and their efficient use, schemes are planned, investigated, formulated, implemented and funded by the State Governments out of their own resources and as per their own priorities. The time by which the schemes are to be completed is dependent on the priority assigned to such schemes by the State Governments and the resources made available for these schemes. To help the State Governments in their efforts to harness the water from natural resources and accelerate creation of irrigation potential by early completion of ongoing schemes, Government of India has launched Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) since 1996-97. Under the programme, financial assistance in form of central loan is being extended to State Governments to help them complete the ongoing irrigation projects in a time bound manner so that the benefits could accrue at the earliest. Accordingly, the Central Loan Assistance (CLA) amounting to Rs.8480 croreto the State Governments have been provided under AIBP upto end of 2001-02. An outlay of Rs. 2800 crore has been provided for the year 2002-03. Additional irrigation potential of over one million hectare upto the end of March, 2002 has been created under AIBP. Assistance is also being extended to State Governments under Command Area Development (CAD) Programme for bridging the gap between potential created and utilised. An expenditure of Rs. 764.15 crore has been incurred during Ninth Five Year Plan under CAD programmeand an outlay of Rs. 202 crore has been provided for the year 2002-2003. Government of India is also promoting rain water harvesting through Watershed Management Programme, artificial recharge of ground water and roof-top rain water harvesting under the sector reform project of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programmeunder the Ministry of Rural Development, for which technical and financial assistance is provided to the State Governments and other implementing agencies. Central Ground Water Board hasalso taken up pilot studies for artificial recharge of ground water. For meeting future requirements of water, as a long term measure, National Water Development Agency have formulated National Perspective Plan for water resources development which envisages interlinking between various Peninsular rivers and Himalayan rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins.